

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA

Governor Jesse Ventura, a/k/a James G.
Janos, an individual,

Civil No. 0:12-cv-00472

Plaintiff,

vs.

**DECLARATION OF
BOB GASSOFF**

Chris Kyle, an individual,

Defendant.

I, Bob Gassoff, do state that the following facts are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief:

1. I provide this Declaration based on my personal knowledge and information and do so from St. Louis, Missouri.
2. I am a Navy SEAL and was on SEAL Team 7, Charlie platoon, during the Iraq war.
3. My SEAL team deployed to Iraq in the summer of 2007, a year after Chris Kyle's team deployed. Both my team and Chris's team were in Al-Inbar province.
4. I am aware that Chris has written a book titled *American Sniper*. I haven't read it, but I'm generally familiar with what it's about.
5. Prior to 2007, I had met Chris in passing. The SEAL community is a small one, and we were both stationed on the west coast. Everyone kind of knows everyone.

6. I got to know Chris and others in his platoon better after Marc Lee and Mikey Monsoor were killed. Marc was one of my best friends. We were swim buddies in BUD/S. I was in the United States when Marc and Mikey died, and I went to both of their funerals.

7. After Mikey's funeral I went with his friends and family to McP's Irish Pub for the traditional celebration we have for our fallen brothers in arms. These "wakes" always end up being a sort of reunion for SEAL teams.

8. I'm not sure if Jesse Ventura was at McP's when I arrived but I vividly remember him being there. I recognized him by sight: he had on a blue SEAL team hat and he had a three- or four-inch braided chin ponytail.

9. At one point in the evening I was standing near Ryan Job, Kevin Lacz, and Chris, and Ryan mentioned he'd like to meet Ventura. Ryan and some of the other guys went over to talk to him.

10. Marc Lee's mother, Debbie Lee, was also at McP's. I had been helping Debbie after Marc's death as part of my duties as a Naval Special Warfare Casualty Assistance Care Officer. Later in the evening, I introduced Debbie to Ventura. I was less than impressed. I introduced Debbie as the mother of a fallen hero, and Ventura could only talk about himself. He didn't say he was sorry for her loss or that he had heard about Marc's service. I was less than pleased that the whole thing happened the way it did.

11. Throughout the day and evening, Ventura was running his mouth. He was badmouthing the war and President Bush. He was upsetting the families of deceased

SEALs. I don't know if Ventura was drinking but I would not be surprised if he was, based on the way he was acting. Maybe he acts like that all the time.

12. The people who were at McP's in honor of Mikey were drinking, but in a social way. I've been to a lot of wakes for SEALs over the past six or seven years and I've never seen people get out of control. That's not what it's about. Chris himself was very composed. He was there taking care of and chaperoning Ryan, who had been blinded in Iraq, just like I was there chaperoning Debbie.


13. I didn't see Chris punch Ventura, but I did witness the commotion surrounding the fight. At the time, I was standing by the door that led onto the patio, and I recall that Chris and Ventura were over by the parking area, near the side street wall. I heard a couple of guys shouting and yelling, and then witnessed a gathering of people around something I couldn't see. The group dispersed quickly. Then someone who had been over in that area—I can't remember who—walked by and I asked what was going on. The person said that Chris had knocked the governor out. Then I heard from others that Chris had punched Ventura because he was saying anti-American things. In the day or two after the fight I heard that Ventura had said that the SEALs deserved to lose a few. I can imagine that if I had been in Chris's shoes I would have had a similar reaction.

14. Word of Chris punching out Ventura spread pretty quickly. I told my parents, the best man from my wedding—a bunch of people. Now that Chris's book has come out I have people calling me up saying things like, "Dude, you told me about that six years ago."

15. I have always admired Chris. I have the utmost respect for him as a person and as a SEAL operator. I think he demonstrates true integrity and character and, unlike Ventura, represents what the SEAL community is all about. He's a humble person. He's not a loudmouth. He doesn't go around beating his chest. He's extremely dependable and the sort of guy everybody would want in their platoon. I'm honored to call him a fellow brother in arms.

I certify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my personal knowledge and belief.

Dated at St. Louis, Missouri, this 14 day of APR, 2012.



Bob Gassoff